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JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM.

BY JOSHUA GILPIN.*

10 Mo. 7 1802

Set off from Wakefield with my friends Pim Nevins & his Son John Nevins on a journey to Bethlehem passed thro' Germantown on the turnpike road to Chestnut hill, where we took the right-hand road leading thro' white marsh township & stopped 18 miles from the City at an inn called the spring house to dine—

Germantown is built very similarly from the 5 miles Stone to Chestnut hill about 10 miles from the City if any difference the houses farther off are newer, better & thiner all of Stone and generally with spaces between which might be very handsomely improved with trees the soil all thro' a sort of isinglass & stone on black sandy bottom & no where very good rather poor.—

The turnpike road now making is formed with Stone out of the adjoining hills & of very different hardness in places to about 7 miles from Phil^a^. with soft black stone which soon grinds to sand, but afterwards with a white flint within a mile of Chestnut hill of a white hard sort of free stone, the two last sorts will want the least repair.

At entering the Bethlehem road at Chestnut hill we had a full view over white Marsh & almost on every side to a very great extent & extremely beautiful, some fine blue hills to the northwest very distinct, the landscape was almost over a woody country which at this season was varied by the coloring of the leaves & which

* Joshua was the father of Henry D. Gilpin (1801–1860) and the son of Thomas Gilpin (1728–1778). Ms. owned by Miss S. Elizabeth Gilpin.

being different in the kinds of trees are nearly as follows—

Walnuts.....Yellow
Maples Swamp Oaks—Red
Poplars & Buttonwoods Yellow
Chestnuts & White Oaks &c green
Auburn

the general manufacture of Stockings generally called Germantown mitted is worthy of remark as they are made so frequent no where else & are superior to any imported & which have been often imitated & unequaled either for duration warmth or softness.—

The road dividing at Chestnut hill & running to the left leads to Reading—from Chestnut Hill the road thro' white Marsh leads thro' a very fine fertile country well cultivated & very rich to our stage the land not at all broken, frequent meadows & altho' we have left the improvements of Citizens we do not miss them much in finding ourselves in the best improvements the cultivation of the luxuriant soil enables them to make, the houses are very neat generally of Stone and often limestone which is here plenty—we passed by the seat of Anthony Morris Esqr about 12 mile from Phila. & an old seat of the Morris family on the other side of the road. Land sells about white marsh for about £25. —.— ℔ acre.—the road at the Spring house inn divides the left hand towards North wales. the right towards Bethlehem

The Spring house inn is kept by a german & is a german inn all speaking the language & have the roughness which we expect to find among them as the country here has been wholly settled by them, we here met a german fleet of waggons say 6 or 7 bringing Oak bark for Philadelphia which was bot. by J. Lyons for shipment to Liverpool & which he gives 30 Dols ℔ ton.

Left our Inn about 3 oClock & came on about 13 miles

to Lodge at Setters's on the Perkiomen Creek.—Our ride this afternoon was thro' a country not so pleasant as in the morning the road rougher & land not so good we crossed many ridges of hills & most of them composed of a red shelly earth & poor tho' vallies better & mostly rich several handsome farm houses.

At about 25 miles from the City we passed the turks head a very good inn at a cross road leading towards Bethlehem and 4 miles further ascended a very high hill called the Perkasay hill from whence we had a most beautiful prospect of the country we had come thro' almost to the Chestnut hill & which was finely varied, both from the color of the woods the clearings of the farms & greeness of the meadows, the sun being low also gave us many charming shades over an extent of prospect as great as I almost ever viewed.—we saw but few houses, indeed I think the germans build but few or none in sight—at least they do not consult that & we remarked there were very few orchards.—

Land with common improvements sells here for about £12. —.— ℔ acre woodland is rather higher.

We lodged at Sellers, & had very comfortable accommodations more so than often near the City, the family very decent & industrious all the linnen of the house which was remarkably nice & white, woolen blankets & counterpanes of their own family make from the sheep & from flax of their own growth. Our land lord has a Store adjoining the tavern & sells a large quantity of goods & takes in produce. he mentioned to us he has now on hand above 12000^{lbs} of firkin butter which he would wish to sell at 9 cents ℔^{lb} but fears he will not be able to obtain it.—

Our bill at the Springhouse Inn today

3 Dinners	93	
1 q^{t} wine Lisbon.....	50	
Hay & 4 qts oats for 3.....	40	D^{s} 1.83
	—	

Bill at Lodgings

3 Suppers	31	.93	
3 Beds	6	.20	
3 horses hay		.60	
18 quarts oats		60	2.33

8. Left our lodgings about ½ after 6 a little after Sunrise & came on about 6 miles to Quakertown at 37½ miles from Phil[a].

Our road continued for about a mile over a tolerable country rather stony & of a red fox earth Shelly to the top of rocky hill from which we had a very beautiful view of the country before us some of the Leheigh hills which were even and rose considerably but the mist not having left them the diversified shades of light & the rays of the Sun gave them all the softness of the morning, between the rocky hill & the distant hills we saw lays the great swamp into which we descended over an extreme rough road as much so as any on Brandywine.—

The land in the great swamp almost on a level & of a redish appearance not very rich tho' of good tillage the wetness of the lowlands has almost disappeared since it has been cleared. Land here sells for about £11.5—with moderate improvements & woodland is worth more.—

We breakfasted at Quakertown at Enoch Roberts a very decent inn they gave us a fine american breakfast of Chicken eggs ham coffee &[c] & sweetmeats for which we paid

3 meals	2/4	7	.93	
12 quarts oats	3[d]		.40	
waiter & hostler			.17	— 1.50

we saw here a drove of Oxen about 50 going for Phil[a]. for fattening at the meadows below it.—

We left the little town about ½ after nine & travelled this a poor country with little worth remarking some-

times having good prospects over the Lehigh hills & over the Bridge to Bethlehem which we reached at one oClock.—

The Lehigh hills certainly afford beautiful views of an extensive country looking over to Bethlehem we saw the extent of a very fine valley which surrounds it, to the Blue Mountains at a very great distance. the day is rather misty & softens the appearance of the landscape & often gives an idea of greater distance than there really is—I think there is always something very grand in the appearance of these immense ranges of mountains which are in many places very steep.—

The Bridge over the Lehigh is about 80 to 100 yds long & is very high from the Stream composed of wooden arches secured with Stones, the stream flows very evenly about 4 to 5 feet deep. & is clear & boatable for 100 miles above, the Lehigh joins the Delaware about 13 miles below here.

The view on the river downward is very fine & the stream may be seen gradually winding narrower at the foot of several ridges of hills till it is abruptly stopped by turning round one of them and it appears to run into the mountains from which it turns and which rises very high and steep over it.—

We made no inquiry of the price of Land on our last stage as we rather wondered that in general any person would buy it, the poorness of it & its being covered with stones rendered it more proper for remaining with its forests. & we thought that the necessary exertion to get a living from it would prevent any person from ever getting rich—he would remain as poor as the land.

We dined at Bethlehem at the Tavern kept under the Moravian establishment, where they were very civil as I expect they are so to all visitors, the person appointed to wait on strangers appeared at the Inn.

Thomas, to whom we declared our desire to see the

place & visit the nunneries &c. which he would have taken us thro', but they being like to occupy all the afternoon we were satisfied with going only thro' the school & concluded to leave seeing the establishment generally 'till our return. in the girls school in which there were not more than 12 employed at needlework, there appeared several not moravians, but those sent mostly from the southern states for education & their art of working which is more beautiful than any I ever saw, it was chiefly of colors on white sattin an elderly matron was in the room but our old guide went thro' the whole circle & as he pleased kissed all of them to which they seemed perfectly accustomed. My time here did not permit me to see much of the place or learn its establishment so that I should only guess at the most interesting part were I to attempt to give it—it appears to have been founded about 61 years—Girls are taken in to educate as they have vacancies, at present they have near 80 & are full price for every kind of tuition & finding about 160 Ds ℔ annum.

Our bill at Bethlehem was.

3 Dinners.....@ 33.....Ds	1.—	
1 pt. Lisbon wine.....	.31	
1 pt. Port	.40	
4 gallons oats.....	.53	
paid ferryage.....	33	2.57

we left Bethlehem about 4 oClock & came on to Easton to lodge which we reached about 7 oClock. the distance from Phila. to Bethlehem is 55 Miles & from thence to Easton about 12 miles—

The road to Easton leads over very fine lands some of them are worn but where they are not & the trees satisfy us that with care they might be continued equal to any— We had several fine views of the hills on the opposite sides of the Lehigh & near Easton many sheets of it very much below us & among the green

woods extremely beautiful, at about 7 miles from Bethlehem we met two waggons removing two families with their appurtenances from a part of New England about 200 miles N. E. of this thro' all Penn^a^.—say Lancaster York Pittsburgh, Wheeling &^c^. to the country on the Ohio about 200 miles below the latter place they call new Connecticut & which perigrenation I calculate to be of about 700 miles.—on our way here at sunset we had the most beautiful shades on the mountains of the redness from the setting sun I ever saw & the Sky extremely rich, with almost every color we are informed a very general imigration from N. E. has taken place thro' this country for Ohio, & is a matter of some surprise as so much land nearer is at all times open & settlers are so much desired by those who own it.—

Easton is situated at the confluence of the Lehigh & Delaware & contains about 150 houses mostly very well built of hewen free stones & appears very neat it contains a court house &^c^. a very plain decent dutch church, the Settlement here was begun about 50 years ago, principally by germans but the town has doubled its inhabitants since about 10 years— Piers are sunk here for a bridge over the delaware & are raised about 10 feet above the water but the cost of building with stone has run them out of money the bridge is intended to be of three arches of wood resting on the Stone & over the breadth of the river of about 600 feet—there is a fall in the river about ½ a mile below the town but which is not so much regarded as others in the navigation— We cannot find there is much navigation down the Lehigh, the delaware is boatable & much used for 200 miles above this for produce and lumber— We remark that the imigrants who first settle the frontiers are Irish & from a disposition very dissimilar to what we would suppose universally dispose of the lands they improved to others of a more settled turn who come among them & again they seek to brave the forests by

which means the wild brutes are encountered by beings as savage as themselves

We called with our letters on Sam[l]. Sitgreaves Esq[r]. who received us with much politeness & made offers of assistance in opening to him our business he gave us letters of introduction to some of his friends. Daniel Stroud near the wind Gap whom he apprehended would be of considerable use to us, we also delivered another to John Arndt who called on us afterwards at the Inn where we lodge & gave us considerable information— I was extremely tired with my days ride having been on horseback & the road very rough, my companion who drove a whisky*, a tandem would often have relieved me, but having heretofore found one or two constant days ride on horseback necessary to season me for it & and to prepare me for prosecuting my journey with ease, I refused.

The mode of driving tandem was quite new in this country and gave us an opportunity of seeing the people generally at the road's side, but altho' it was singular even to me I must confess was of great benefit as I think one horse would have been unable to have drawn a chaise as we came without excessive fatigue—

9th. We were to have set off this morning to find George Palmer but accidentally learned he was from home on a survey & was expected at this place about noon, so that under the prospect of seeing him we waited all the day & had a full opportunity of resting ourselves, viewing the town & paying several visits,— About noon we walked down to the Delaware & along its bank at the edge of the town saw several large rafts of timber ashore on the side of the river which had lately been bro't down & we afterwards walked over to the other side of the town & on the bank of the Lehigh about its connection with the Delaware— Over the

* "A low, light, one-horse chaise without hood or top."—Webster. Sometimes called a "tim whiskey."

Lehigh at this place is a fine wooden bridge of three arches about 260 feet long & at a very great elevation say 35 feet above the water, which is about 10 feet deep—from the bridge we had a fine view up the river, having crossed we ascended by a narrow path a craggy imminence close on the side of the river which we supposed was about 200 feet & which being perpendicular on the side next Easton gave us a full prospect of it a view up the Lehigh & up & down the Delaware to a very considerable distance & which tracing all the streams till they ascended before the eye & terminated among the adjoining high hills was very fine,— There are in sight several falls on the Delaware both above & below Easton & one small fall on the Lehigh which being ruffled by a breeze created a little white foam or spray & enlivened the appearance on both those beautiful streams— There are on the shores of this part of the Delaware similar to those on the Susquehannah rocky precipices which overhang them and which are composed of colored strata these again are shaded with trees & thro' which they are seen sometimes plainly & often partly covered are extremely fine & would add much to a landscape.—We visited a Mill on the Delaware about half a mile below Easton begun by one Pearson of this place intended to be moved by water taken from the river near the mouth of the Lehigh & without any damb but the depth of digging to the level of the water has been too expensive & altho' the mill is built & appears very well the work is at present at a stand.—

I think the Lehigh river is in all its circumstances very much like the Juniatta to the Susquehannah, they both run in to the main rivers at a similar distance from the tide, run a course eastward & are of about an equal bredth & depth & equal navigation upwards & downwards thro' fertile country.

We went thro' the Court house & office for keeping

the records of the County which is built completely fire proof arched rooms with stone floors & iron windows—

Dined at our Inn, & after walking to the north extremity of the village which is bounded by a small stream called Little Bushkill called on S. Sitgreaves & took tea. In the evening not having found George Palmer to have come here, we concluded to go up to his house in the morning.—

The Peasantry of this Country indeed almost since we set out are wholly german many of whom speak little english & are a very frugal hardy race they are mostly Lutherans & Calvinists & are universally of the profession of farmers, in their attention to which they lose all their secular distinctions & they dress very plainly indeed with very little singularity or show— I am convinced that many farmers even of our own country would lay by nothing where these collect handsome esates—Two respectable farmers came to our Inn this afternoon from 50 miles towards the city & travelling on horseback fed here with oats they brought from home— I think that among germans the accommodation we would expect in the same rank of life in travelling would be as much viewed in the light of singularity as their contrary manners would among us— In this country generally the poor & the artificers are paid extravagantly for all they do, they so therefore thrive, but the employers do not get the value of the money they pay, it is therefore the interest of everyone to do as much for themselves & as much for others as possible & of this the germans are very fully sensible.—

The Church at this place was built by a subscription of the members of the different societies for their accommodation without distinction & is so accordingly used by them, English & German Lutherans & German Calvinists alternately on a first day

10th. We left our Inn after breakfast this morning

to go to George Palmers whom we supposed would have returned home on the preceeding evening but on enquiry for our road were informed about 3 miles from Easton that he remained in that neighborhood about a mile further & we were directed to find him accordingly pursuing our road for that purpose we found no place to answer the description we had received and that we had wandered into a settlement of people to whom we could not make ourselves understood & who only perplexed us with the means they took to assist us, indeed I never knew before the total want of a Language for in this respect we might quite as well have been in the middle of Germany. J. Nevins being vexed at one of the houses we called at with their speaking only a foreign tongue instead of the American & giving travellers no information got to talking Spanish to them— After being sent and steering about thro' lanes & woods & fields for about 3 hours & 10 or 14 miles we found ourselves very happily returned into the road which two days before had brot us from Bethlehem to Easton & our Whiskey & tandem little calculated for any other such search yet the object of our ride unanswered & of course a risk of a further unpleasant delay—under this impression as half the day was before us I urged the propriety of my friends returning to Easton & I would spend the remainder of it in searching & endeavoring to compleat our object & if the people could not speak english I would speak dutch— I left them to go home & tho I knew we were further off than ever I got directions for about half a mile & depended when there to push my way further, accordingly having rode that distance I was at the forks of a road & discovering a boy in a field called him & found he could speak no more english than the rest, however I pronounced the name of the man's house I wanted & he pointed in the direction of it & I asked "*mile*" he said "*two mile*" then I took out my purse an

eleven pence, pointed to him & to the back of my horse & then to the house which he understood quite as I wished him & accordingly mounted holding round my waist—he was a very neat little german boy dressed in a red jacket & linsey trousers & intelligent. I soon found from my having heard a few german words I could make him understand I wanted the names of things & before I got to the house had them of everything I could point to such as horse, hogs road woods tree &c.— So that I passed about an hour with some diversion as well as from the pleasure of coming to a place we had so long sought in vain & to which the boy did not fail to bring me.

Having found G. Palmer I made an engagement with him which he fulfiled on my return to Easton & spent the remainder of the Day in informing us upon the object of our journey his own engagements and ill health absolutely preventing his giving us his personal assistance we received instructions to persons on our way to accomplish it.

Our wanderings today gave us an opportunity of seeing a tract of country much known & called on account of its want of water the Dry Lands being part of a tract of 40000 Acres for some time disputed by some Irish settlers with the Propriitary's Manor survey, on account of some informality in it—& being on that account uncertain as to its issue was much depredated— The farmers have to bring water upon it even for ordinary purposes for several miles, otherwise the situation & lands are both very fine.

During our days excursion we had many fine prospects of the country blue mountains and the Wind Gap at about 15 Miles distance & on my return a view down the Lehigh to a little brook northward of Easton which appeared to open an immense high & craggy rocky hill, the varied strata of which gave beautiful colors. P. Nevins had on his way into town been

struck with its beauties & ascended it from whence he had a very handsome prospect & brot with him several very curious stones one of which appeared like a lump of melted glass—

11th. We mounted our horses early this morning for our journey to the woods thro' the Wind Gap & rode 12 miles to Heller's Inn to breakfast.—

Our bills at Opps tavern Easton during our stay were—

8th.	3 Suppers	31	.93	
	½ gill brandy		.25	
9th.	3 breakfasts	31	.93	
	3 Dinners	33	1.—	
	1 bottle madeira		1.20	
	brandy		.38	
	cider		.12	
10.	breakfast		.93	
	beds		.80	
	3 horses hay		2.—	
	oats		2.20	10.74
	3 Dinners		1.—	
	1 qt. madeira		1.20	
	1 Gl Brandy		.12	
	3 Sopers		.93	
	3 Uffen ... or beds		.40	
	3 Lyst. or hay 3 night		1.—	
	38 q obr. or oats		1.20	5.85–16.59

we had for dinner often fowls & pidgeons nicely barbacued a veal cutlet & Roast beef with preserves desert &c. all for 2/6—

On leaving Easton we came over the Lehigh hills on the north side of the river and had a fine view of Easton & the country we had passed the cultivation round the town was more seen than at any situation we had had before & with the addition of several fine sheets of the

Delaware— The Country the whole of the road from Easton to Hellers is excessively rocky poor & rough filled with Oak barrens & pines & gives nothing pleasant or interesting we reached Hellers about 10 oClock to breakfast—

Hellers has been residing here about 40 years & during 2 indian wars, has several handsome stone houses &c.—Bill for breakfast & oats Ds. 1—

After breakfast we pursued our road to the Wind Gap which we passed & reached G. Lever's 3 miles from heller's about 1 oClock—the road was excessively rough & rocky the ascent up the Gap not very steep and no great elevation not so much as over the Lehigh hills —but on both sides immense & successive rocks on which for great distances there is no herbage & the appearance of the continuance & height of them is very grand they are as clear of earth and the interstices are as open as tho' they had been inundated quite lately— the opinion that the Delaware river run once thro' this Gap has often been advanced & argued from the appearance of the rocks being worn the very great defile and break there is in the mountain &c. but I have never heard there has been any trace of the river among the lower lands on the South Side nor any bed found to the north of it. From every appearance of the rocks & shape of the breaks in the blue mountains at several places in which I have seen it in Pennsylvania Maryland & Virginia & from the petrified sea shells found on the north side of it there is every argument to reason there has at sometime been a lake water confined on the North side of the Mountain which has escaped at sundry places one the bed of the Potowmack river the Susquehannah & Delaware & perhaps partially at this Wind Gap— Down several hills on our way here we could see the break in the blue mountain at this gap & its high ridge to the passage of the Delaware river which is called the water Gap.

About half a mile on the N. W side of the Wind Gap there is a lake about half a mile in circumference which I note as a thing unusual in this country and may on that account be admitted to have a reference to the place and an effect produced by the causes which are conjectured to have produced so great a decline in the mountain—

At George Levers's we informed him of our business to see some of the lands in which his family were interested & connected with William Fisher of Leeds. and spent the remainder of the afternoon in arranging our business with him to accompany us the next day— We then set off about 5 oClock in the afternoon for lodgings at Cimon Hellers about 4 miles from G. L.'s on the road leading northward to the State of Nyk.

I think the north side of the blue mountain is better than the East or South side as it appeared covered with earth or timber generally, which however impracticable to take much away or however rough to get among it, is different from the other, which is wholly rocks of a size & quantity scarcely creditable & which lay so loosely that neither man nor beast can ever go over them. the north side may possibly be visited by both— It may prove in this country similarly to our western lands that the north side of the hills are freest from rocks & contain the best soil. which was there the universal mark, if it should and the theory admitted of the water having passed over them we may draw the conclusion that in the fall the torrent has washed the earth from the south sides & the deposits were left on the north as certainly the passage of water in these parts has been to the S. E. according to the present direction of the waters of the country.—During the period of land speculations all the blue mountain lying between the wind & water Gaps about 12 miles in length & 2 broad was taken up by G. Levers, I cannot say surveyed as no man has or ever could do that and was sold

to James Wilson Esqr. at 25 cents ℔ acre a tract of about 9000 acres. the attendant expenses of fees was about 15 cents ℔ acre how unhappy is such business as this a certain ruin to the projector and a certain one either to those deceived in a purchase or to those who have unwarily intrusted property to him—

George Levers is settled on 500 acres of Land purch.^{d} for £2.—and now values at £5— not so much owing to his improvements as to the estimation such lands are held in by the Germans who seek them & who are often buying, he has been settled about 2 years on the land has built a small log house & barn & cleared ab^{t} 120 acres partly meadow, the upland is very stony but the stones are loose & in most instances round pebbles so that the soil appears to be wholly made up of the decayed leaves & wood on clearing this yields perhaps the first year the finest crop of anything the mould & generally surface being the finest in the world, but that excessive richness is wholly expended in the first harvest and the field is reduced to a state of extreme poverty not fit again for grain for several years & then only so from great care— Many crops in this way I have been inform have brot 40 to 45 bushels of wheat to the acre and enabled the settler to pay for his lands & expenses of improvements yet the satisfaction of having exhausted its vitals is an alloy not to be assisted.—the meadow land about this country at least what are really flat bottoms are very good tho' very rare & tho' difficult to drain— The lands of the description of these provided they are handy to the road Settlers are very fond of as they are soon productive and the future state is not much regarded, they remedy the matter in their own views but clearing annually— I have thus given a clear account of the soil as it is so generally resorted to & because we think the lands are higher in price than in proportion to any others whatever. George Levers attended us on foot to our lodg-

ings. about 4 miles & gave us a description of the country as we passed thro' the road run all the way parallel to the blue mountain & about 2 miles from it, about half way we had a very fine view at Sunset over an amasing extent of valley into which projected the points of several large ridges of mountains which appeared to vanish into it some by abrupt & others by even declines, the Pokono mountain at about 30 or 40 miles closed the scene which was more interesting to us as it contained & G. L. pointed out to us the field of our intended labors

Some of the near meadows below the hill we were on are very rich but no great quantity is to be obtained— the cost of clearing land here is about 4 Dollars ℔ acre.—

Our road continued over much such land as I have described till we came to Hellers which is a farm in better order & tho' it has been settled for near 30 years the land is better also his improvements are tolerable perhaps houses &ᶜ. all to gether worth £300—and including them he says he could have for 200 acres £2,000 —which appears excessively dear and scarcely to be reconciled the advantages of this country consist in their nearness to Delaware navigation & to having partly a dutch settlement on them— the Soil is more inviting than a more difficult one even if ever so productive— On several places we have already seen stone walls built for the clearing of the land which is laborious indeed for a young settlement— On our way we concluded from information & our own judgment that until we came to the Oak barrens near the blue mountain all the country was cleared enough & those will never be attempted, by good settlers & of course this country must receive them & lands become valuable, yet one feels repugnant at buying such ordinary lands, & which will certainly convince a person absent that they are so is to let him reason a query what has been

the cause that these lands have never been generally settled—because they will not admit of it—and why not partially because the good prices have been too small & would have so dispersed a generally body of people they would have lost the benefit of each other—thus has lands within 80 miles of Phil[a]. & N. Yk. remain unoccupied to this day, tho' circumstances appear as if they would now combine to forward them— I do not believe there is anything more difficult to judge rightly of than of lands as to future prospects and however it may be improper to lay down rules generally, I would venture to assert, that where the roughness of a country prevents its general settlement the picket lands even there are of little value,

1st. a general settlement only, renders preferable places desirable—

2. Settlers if they are of the same society are recompensed if capable of mutual assistance & disappointed if not permitted it by situation.—

3. No neighborhood is formed to invite others—

4. The roads instead of being short are multiplied, very difficult to make & support & each one has to support as much at his own labor as in any other case is done by the whole, and

5. No two interests are combined in any effective improvement which would otherwise be the pleasure of all—

The Streams of water on the north side, the blue mountains are extremely beautiful there were several equal to turn two mills each & run over gravel beds as clear as limestone.—

At Hellers Inn we found was to be held the following day the State Election we therefore endeavored to leave as little business over as possible. G. L. staid with us till 10 oClock and then returned home on foot & we retired.—

The People here generally are democratic.—

12th. George Levers agreeable to his appointment came to us this morning at 10 oClock but his wife being unwell we were under the necessity of excusing him to go for attendance for her & under his promise to meet us very early at Strouds tavern at Stroudsburg 6 miles further very early next morning paid the following bill at Cn. Hellers—

Hay for horses 3	.75	
18 qts oats	.60	
Do ..... Do	.60	
1 bottle lisbon wine	.62	
4 Suppers Ds. 1—3 breakfs.—.75 brandy 12½ Lodgs. 20	2.7	4.64

we left Hellers about 10 oClock & reached Strouds about 1. our way was extremely rough over all manner of roads & hills washed into ruts some of the hills we ascended to very great heights & had very charming views of the valley below, the blue mountain particularly to a very great distance & which is very well cultivated our height was often so much above it we almost looked into it & could have plotted the size of every farm & know the produce of every clearing. the distances were much softened by a haziness of the day— In several of the hills our frd. P. N. saw decisive marks of coals, the earth on top was light, redish, next a soft purple or [illegible] Stone next Slate like those from England & various strata & declinations of it— In one plane we found a large mineral spring with a quantity of ochre—

Stroudsburg is situated on a tract of Land once bought by Robert Levins & is in a valley separated by a small ridge from the Blue mountain & is certainly the most like a handsome family settlement of any place I have seen yet the old man who is a venerable piece of antiquity has lived here 40 years & some time before the french war in which & on the American side of the

Revolution he was colonel & this spot at which I now write was fort Penn.

The Settlement here consists of an improvement of 800 or 900 acres cleared which is well managed as to produce & that again turned to the best advantage, by mills erected in M^c^Michaels creek a fine stream which goes thro' it & which work to grind flour & saw & a tavern & store which have good custom & are decently kept.—

The family have here the mansion house which is resided in by Daniel Stroud who is very much of a gentleman, is a large three story stone house 4 rooms on a floor, & very handsomely rough cast.

As to the land of this Settlement I think the upland stoney tho' better than most, meadow very good—and every thing is in a great plenty as can be desired, hogs cattle &^c^. in abundance indeed for care I thought it had much the appearance of a maryland farm & those who know that well may form a very correct idea of it—except that instead of a dead level plain the land gently rises & of a sight bounded by the flat fields of the farm a view at distance of the highest mountains in America instead of the sallow complexions of marshes, the brightness of color to the whitest age & no ague ever heard of.

I have seen nothing among these lands hitherto at all to compare to the general aspect of our Westmoreland lands, their levelness and richness and being free from ridges, is of a quantity which this country has not yet shown indeed scarcely at all since we left the City—I used to think they were not inferior to the meadows below Phil^a^.—

We dined at Strouds and finding the afternoon to spare concluded to make use of it to visit the passage of the Delaware thro' the Blue Mountain at the break called the Water Gap which we were informed was often visited as a great natural curiosity— We set of

about 3 oClock understanding the distance to be about 3 miles, crossed a very high ridge of hills lying between this & the Mountain & along the top of the mountain side of this ridge had a very fine view of the valley between & the slope up & along the the mountain which appeared very steep and untill its distance led its color to be lost in a mist and clouds which collected at intervals on its sides—from our elevation on the ridge we saw many farms and green meadows & in the valley several handsome houses, into this run likewise the points of several other ridges which were all very much varied in the farms & clearing upon them— These run mostly from the north our elevation being considerable we rather looked at the blue mountain than as is common at so small a distance as about half a mile, & could form an idea of its grandeur & especially of the declivities of the Wind Gap, the shape or profile of that noble passage— We had here a fuller view of the varied color of the woods than ever before as on the mountain whose side was opposite to us for a road of a mile we could see every single tree from its root to its top & as they stood above each other to the summit of the mountain almost without one being hid.— the whole of trees over trees—and perhaps of more kinds than are found anywhere else about here the Pines, Hemlocks Cedars laurels & other evergreens are not numerous & save to support the variety, as the verdure of all the rest has become affected more or less & exhibits yellow red auburn purple orange and all the shades of each, I do not admire this change near so much as the shades of our fall verdure as I think its richness is always superior to this, which carries with it too much the idea of decay.—

It was my lot to commence my driving tandem over this road which I performed with more skill than I expected as I never drove on a more dangerous one, the edge of the road often meeting that of a precipice

into the valley— Just before we went down to the river we ascended a hill & perceived its decline very rugged tied our horses among the trees & went on foot, on our way to the edge of the water we passed several fine springs one of which turned a saw mill to which it was conducted by a trunk about 100 feet out of the hill & precipitated at a fall of about 40 feet—opposite to the saw mill the river is about 300 feet wide & scarcely deep enough to float a canoe but as we keep along the gap gradually deepened—near the Saw mill there is a small island in the middle of it— We now took the waggon road leading between the mountains edge & the river & which all the labor of the inhabitants have been ineffectual to make more than about 8 feet wide or to clear from excessive roughness as it leads over one rough hillock to another the whole distance.— the precipices of the mountain in places are almost perpendicular & composed of loose stones nearly as large as a house without one particle of earth for distances to gether at others they are the solid rocks of the mountains & are then covered with trees which project over them & moss & fern which overhang them & which are in clumps of a most rich green, the rocks almost all colors from white to black & the strata on the side of the road before we come to the actual defile generally horizontal— about ½ mile from the Saw mill on the road there has been selected a little spot sufficient to contain a hut where there lives a family— we walked on about a mile and an half from the Saw mill till we came quite thro' the gap and till we came opposite to the narrowest pass of the water which is a place of singular curiosity & capable of much amusing research & observation—we had observed that till we came here whenever the rocks on one side had advanced to the waters edge which they did generally on the north side they had retired on that opposite but at this passage which was certainly the solid barrier & heart of

the mountain & which appears was once as firmly established as one may believe the unity of an entire rock to be, the torrent has prevailed to break thro.— here the sides of the opposite declivities are composed of Strata of a similar declination of layers of about 2 foot in breadth declining about 75 degrees from the horizon to the south and perfectly regular from the summit to the waters edge or to the base of the mountain— the precipices are in so small cavities covered thinly with trees but no where to cover the strata which are distinct in shape & color, white purple green brown black &c and which with the moss give them a tremendous appearance as it attracts the sight to every projection to an heighth the eye cannot at first reconcile—

The profile of this passage is well seen from hills all over the country & is extremely abrupt & particularly on the Jersey side, more so I think than harpers ferry. but what is different here is that the strata go down into the water and the interstices cause a roughness against which it sprays added to this at this singular *place the depth of the river is immense.* & the boldness of its shores greater than I had ever seen, & about half a mile below the defile the bottom of the river is composed of rocks of an immense size similar to those which I saw all along on the precipices, before I came to its actual break into the heart of the mountain— The situation of these stones, is such that no person who will attentively consider can do else than admit they have belonged to the ridge & they are carried into a place of ground at which the bed of the river flows over sand— Thus if one admits reasoning from analogy we can easily admit the river to have passed through this opening & formed it from its summit and an attentive view of the country on the north side which must have in this case have been a lake to an amazing extent is equally satisfactory to prove it so, both from the deposits of soil, at other places which must have been

in the current of the wash of it & also of the repeated petrifactions of marine shells.— The height of the mountain at the precipice has not been ever taken but I think it is greater than at Harpers ferry which was measured by A. Elliott 596 feet and as the mountain top is much worn away I think the fair level of its summit may be as much higher as it slopes thus

To this may be added the depth if it can be conjectured of the water at the bases of the declivities & which we may suppose is as the bason which received the water fall.— over the whole of this country are found the worn pebble stones similar to those in the bed of Delaware River— Our observations & reflections on this great scene detained us almost till dark & our road on foot about 2 miles over a very rugged & hilly path so long that we did not get on very well till the moon rose by which we travelled nearly all our way home, it changed our scene & very pleasantly as it was bright enough to give us a prospect over the vallies, to a considerable extent, to enlighten very prettily the tops of the hills & to shade the cavities & projections as we passed thro the mountains & render the scenes more romantic, as we came down the mountains the evening dews & mists settling around them were enlightened by the moon & shone or reflected very agreeably— We returned to Strouds about 8 oClock where we rested a little time— I omitted to mention that about a mile from the Gap we passed by a little village collected round a store kept by a french man of the name of Dutot & half a mile further at a tavern an election ground at which were received about 120 votes mostly democratic—

(To be continued.)